

September 19, 2005

The Honorable Richard Pombo
Chairman
House Resources Committee
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Pombo:

On behalf of the Western Business Roundtable, I applaud you for introducing the **Threatened and Endangered Species Recovery Act of 2005** (H.R. 3824) or "TESRA." Reform of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) has long been a priority of the Roundtable. TESRA addresses many long-standing issues our members have identified as serious impediments to effectively helping species in trouble. We appreciate your leadership on this issue and look forward to working with you and other members of Congress to pass meaningful ESA reforms.

Like most Americans, Roundtable members support the protection of endangered and threatened species and recovery of such species to biological health. Unfortunately, the Act has become focused myopically on adding species to a list, rather than actually recovering them to health. In fact, according to U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) data, the ESA has achieved a less-than one percent success rate in species recovery.

We believe that, as a nation, we can do better. Your legislation is a strong step in the right direction.

In particular, we support these and other provisions in TESRA and encourage your continued support for them as the process moves forward:

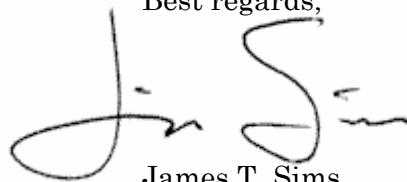
1. **Giving state and local governments more of a say in the listing and recovery processes.**
2. **Opening the listing process to the sunshine of public disclosure.**
3. **Basing decisions on independently verifiable science.**
4. **Replacing the "critical habitat" process with science-based recovery plans.**
5. **Increasing communications and coordination among federal agencies.**
6. **Developing better incentives for landowners who have endangered species or habitat on their property.**

- 7. Compensating private property owners for the fair market value of loss of use of their property.**
- 8. Decreasing the number of ESA related lawsuits.**

By providing incentives, increasing openness and accountability, strengthening scientific standards, creating bigger roles for state and local governments and protecting private property owners, TESRA would go a long way towards both helping America recover species in trouble and protecting the legitimate interests of the American citizenry.

Thank you again for introducing this watershed legislation. We very much appreciate your fortitude in taking on this most difficult of issues. If our members can be of assistance in providing more information to you or the House Resources Committee, we would welcome the opportunity to do so.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Sims', with a stylized flourish at the end.

James T. Sims
Executive Director

cc: House Resources Committee
Interior Secretary Gale Norton
Western Governors' Association
Western Governors
Western Congressional delegations

The Roundtable is a non-profit business trade association comprised of CEOs and senior executives of organizations doing business in the Western United States. Our member companies are involved in a broad range of industries, including agricultural products ,accounting, chemicals, coal, construction and construction materials, conventional and renewable energy production, energy services, engineering, financial services, internet technologies, manufacturing, mining, oil and gas, pharmaceuticals, pipelines, telecommunications, and public and investor-owned utilities. We work for a common sense, balanced approach to economic development and environmental conservation, and we support public policies that encourage economic growth, opportunity and freedom of enterprise.